

Applic. No. 10/698,075
Amdt. dated March 27, 2006
Reply to Office action of December 27, 2005

Remarks/Arguments:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-21 remain in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 18-21 have been withdrawn from further consideration.

In the third paragraph on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, the drawings have been objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a).

The Examiner stated that the pneumatic grooves introduced into the segment prongs of at least one of said first and second comb segments must be shown or the features cancelled from the claims. The Examiner is respectfully directed to page 35, line 17, where the pneumatic grooves 29 and 30 are disclosed. The pneumatic grooves 29 and 30 are shown in Fig. 3. The Examiner is respectfully directed to page 31, line 17 to page 32, lines 14, where the segment prongs 24 and 25 and the first and second comb segments 14 and 15 are disclosed. The segment prongs 24 and 25 and the first and second comb segments 14 and 15 are shown in Figs. 2 and 3. Therefore, the drawings have

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not been amended to overcome the objection to the drawings by the Examiner.

The Examiner stated that in Fig. 3 it appears the suction grooves 29 are located adjacent the suction prongs 27 and 26 rather than in the suction prongs as required by the claims. It is respectfully noted that the reference numerals 27 and 26 pertain to interspaces and not to "suction prongs". There are no "suction prongs" in the claims. Accordingly, it is respectfully believed that the Examiner's comments are not accurate. Therefore, the drawings have not been amended to overcome the objection to the drawings by the Examiner.

Should the Examiner find any further objectionable items, counsel would appreciate a telephone call during which the matter may be resolved.

In the third paragraph on page 3 of the Office action, claims 1-6 and 14-17 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by Lammers et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,202,542) (hereinafter "Lammers") under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

The rejection has been noted and the claims have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. The claims are patentable for the

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reasons set forth below. Support for the changes is found on page 30, lines 17-22 of the specification.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, *inter alia*:

the sheet support surface having a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermeshing with one another.

The Lammers reference discloses an apparatus for handling flexible sheet material of different sizes. Lammers discloses a drum (10) having slots (35). The slots (35) have raised portions disposed therein.

The reference does not show the sheet support surface having a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermeshing with one another, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. The Lammers reference discloses that a drum has a slot with raised portions disposed in the groove. Lammers does not disclose a first comb segment

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and a second comb segment intermeshing with one another. This is contrary to the invention of the instant application as claimed, in which the sheet support surface has a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermeshing with one another.

Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable over Lammers, dependent claims 2-6 and 14-17 are believed to be allowable over Lammers as well.

In the sixth paragraph on page 4 of the Office action, claims 1-3 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by Jeschke et al. (U.S. Patent No.3,986,455) (hereinafter "Jeschke") under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

It is noted that the corporate assignee of the Jeschke reference is also the assignee of the instant application. Therefore, applicants are very familiar with the Jeschke reference.

The Jeschke reference discloses a sheet-guiding drum for printing presses. The drum (1) has flow channels (8) formed therein and support ribs (17).

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The reference does not show the sheet support surface having a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermeshing with one another, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. The Jeschke reference discloses a drum having flow channels formed therein and support ribs. Jeschke does not disclose a first comb segment and a second comb segment intermeshing with one another. This is contrary to the invention of the instant application as claimed, in which the sheet support surface has a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermeshing with one another.

Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable over Jeschke, dependent claims 2 and 3 are believed to be allowable as well.

In the first paragraph on page 5 of the Office action, claims 1-13 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by Schuetz et al. (DE 1 964 780) (hereinafter "Schuetz") under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

The Schuetz reference discloses a transport cylinder for printing presses. The transport cylinder (1) has crawler

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idlers (6) with grooves (8) formed therein. The crawler idlers (6) have boreholes (12) formed therein.

The reference does not show the sheet support surface having a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermeshing with one another, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. The Schuetz reference discloses drum crawler idlers with grooves formed therein. Schuetz does not disclose a first comb segment and a second comb segment intermeshing with one another. This is contrary to the invention of the instant application as claimed, in which the sheet support surface has a first comb segment with segment prongs and a second comb segment with segment prongs, the first comb segment and the second comb segment intermesh with one another.

Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable over Schuetz, dependent claims 2-13 are believed to be allowable over Schuetz as well.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 1. Claim 1 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since

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all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-17 are solicited.

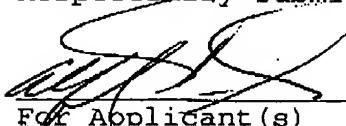
In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel respectfully requests a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

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Please charge any other fees which might be due with respect
to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner
Greenberg & Stemer LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,



For Applicant(s)

AKD:cgm

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